Distance Charging Centre (SDCC) on Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS).

(xi) Computerisation of Fault Repair Service (FRS) at more & more places.

In addition, MTNL is taking following steps to improve quality of Cellular Mobile Services :

(i) A dedicated network management group has been deployed.

(ii) Continuous monitoring through drive tests is being carried out and RF optimisation is done to improve RF signal strength.

(iii) The software bugs in billing system have been removed and regular bills are being issued.

(iv) To improve customer interface, a full fledged call centre with IVRS facility is being set up. In addition to existing three Customer Care Centres, another five Customer Care Centres are being opened.

(v) To facilitate the bill payment, billing counters have been opened in different localities. In addition, bill viewing and payment through Internet and cheque collections through drop boxes provided by Banks have also been arranged.

Regularisation of Data Entry Operators

1669. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunication and MTNL have been separated;

(b) whether Data Entry Operators have been working on contract basis in the Department of Telecommunication since February, 1999 and they have not been regularised, so far;

(c) whether Government would regularise their services; and

(d) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) MTNL is a public sector undertaking under the administrative control of Department of Telecommunication in the ministry of Communication & Information Technology.

(b) No, Sir. Data Entry Operators are engaged on contract for specific project only and they have not been regularised.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The engagement is for specific project only. Hence question of regularisation does not arise.

Opening of post offices

1670. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of new post offices proposed to be opened during the year 2002-03;

(b) how many new post offices are proposed to be opened in Karnataka during the above period; and

(c) how many post offices are proposed to be computerised in Karnataka during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN) : (a) 275 new post offices are proposed to be opened during 2002-03. Opening of new post offices is subject to the norms based justification and availability of requisite resources.

(b) Out of these 275 new post offices, 10 post offices are proposed to be opened in Karnataka during 2002-03.

(c) Depending upon completion of procedures and availability of funds, 8 (eight) offices will be computerised in Karnataka during 2002-03.

Demand for reduction in licence fee

1671. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether private cellular operators have recently, demanded reduction of licence fee burden and permission to install adequate spectrum for superior service at lower costs;